



**Town of Arlington  
Office of the Town Manager**

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**To:** Arlington Board of Selectmen, Town Manager, and Town Department Heads

**RE:** Public Website Survey Results

**Date:** July 18, 2013

**Introduction:** The Town of Arlington is in the process of updating its website, [www.arlingtonma.gov](http://www.arlingtonma.gov), with the goal of making it more user-friendly for visitors and more efficient to manage for staff. This will result in a new-looking website and the integration of a Content Management System (CMS). Beyond looking at analytics of website traffic and discussions with internal stakeholders, the Town wanted to learn more about its site visitors. Questions about who visits the site and how and why they use it were included. To help us with the design of the site, we also wanted to know how visitors perceive the character of the Town. To help answer these questions an online public survey was conducted in early May. This is not a comprehensive survey by any means, but it does provide some valuable insight and guidance as the Town continues to develop and design the next version of [arlingtonma.gov](http://www.arlingtonma.gov).

**Methodologies:** The survey was conducted via Survey Monkey and publicized on the Town's website and local media. Three Town of Arlington Notices (email alerts) were sent during the two weeks the survey was online.

**Top line/Demographic Information:**

**Number of respondents:** We received 1,304 responses to the short, 9 question survey.

**Residents vs non-residents:** 89% or 1,043 respondents claim to be Arlington residents, 11% (134) are not.

**Work in Arlington:** 36% (426) respondents claim to work in Arlington, 64% (751) do not work in Town.

**Arlington Business Owners:** 8% (95) claim to be Arlington business owners, 92% (1,081) are not.

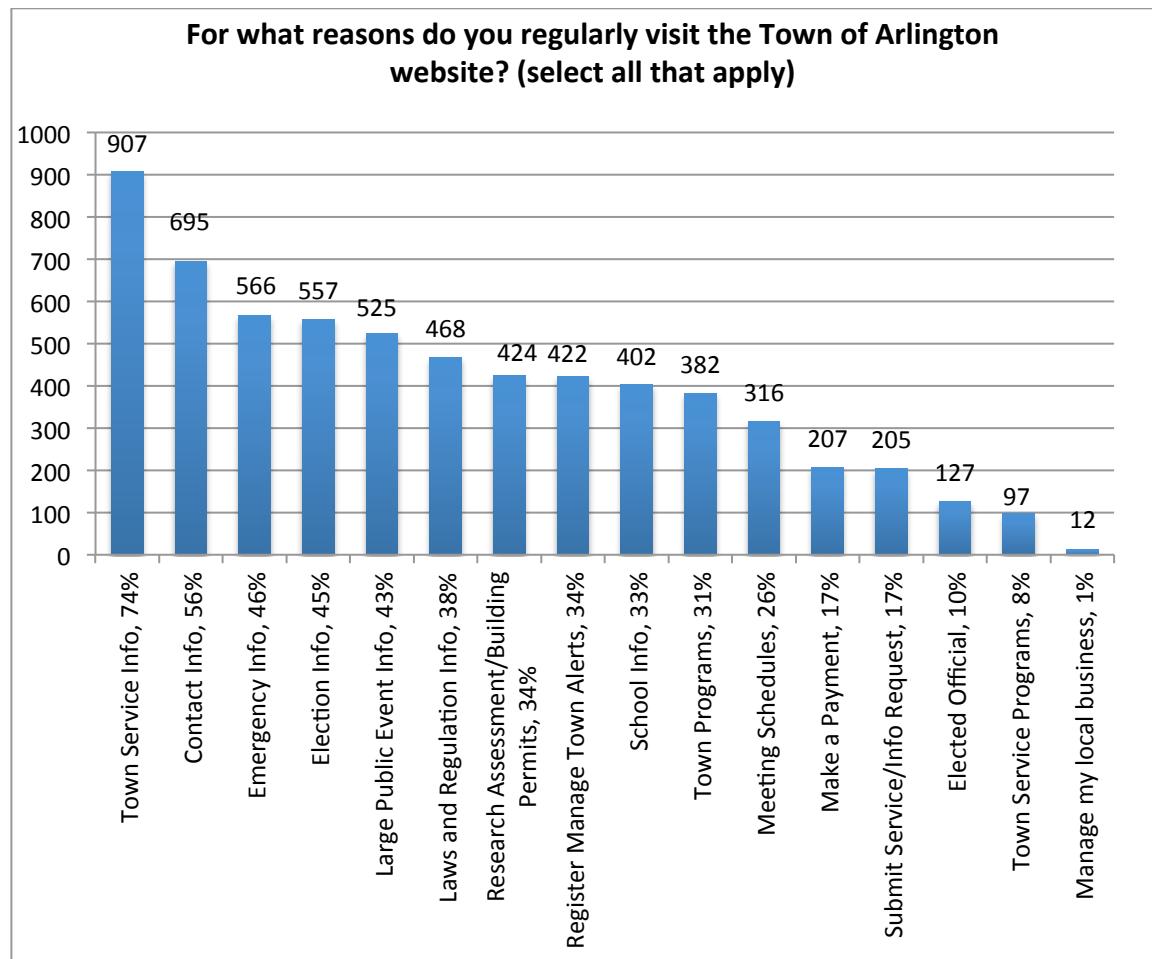
**Age:** 56% (650) respondents are between the ages of 30-54, 24% (280) are between 55-64 years old, and 11% (132) are between the ages of 65-74.

**How often respondents currently visit the site:** 36% (471) respondents report using the site about monthly or less, 27% (357) reported they visit the site 2-3 times a month, while 19% (242) report visiting about once a week.

*(These charts can be found at the end of this report on page 6.)*

**For what reasons do you regularly visit the Town of Arlington website?  
(select all that apply)**

The top response for current usage of the Town's website was to look up information about a Town service, such as trash/recycling, public safety, or street sweeping (74% or 907), followed by finding Town contact information (56% or 695). Looking up emergency information such as weather alerts, parking bans, and other Town closures (46% or 566), finding election information (45% or 557), and information on large public event (43% or 525) were next most cited. Other common usage areas include information on Town laws and regulations (38% or 468), building permits (34% or 424), school information (33% or 402), or Town programs (31% or 382).

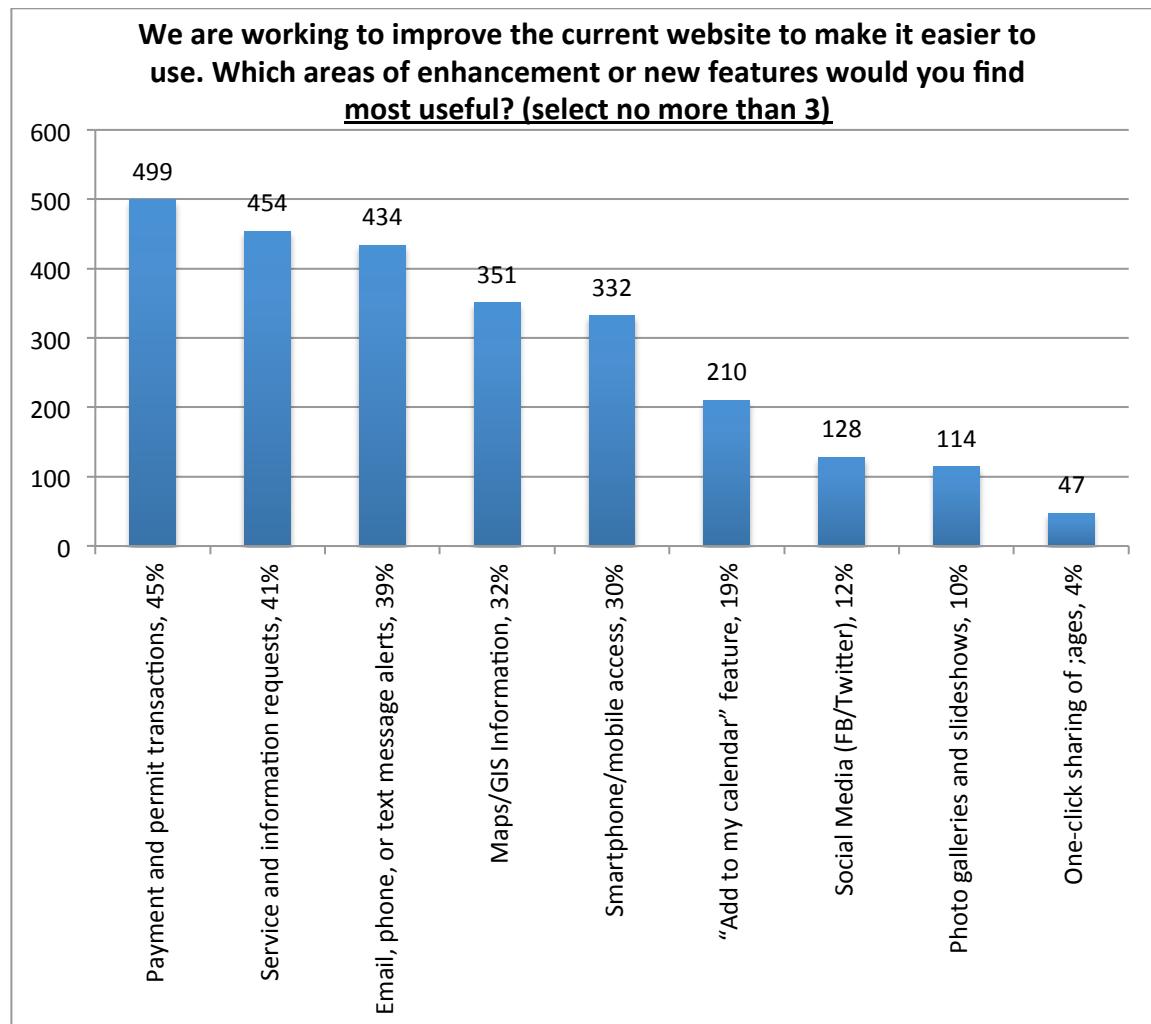


**Initial Conclusions/Response:** These results tell us that we should ensure that service and contact information is readily available and easy to find. Emergency and related information should be prominent when necessary and visitors come to the site to learn about large Town events.

The Town currently puts great emphasis on providing service and emergency information. We do provide information on Large Public Events and the responses here indicate there may be an opportunity to enhance promotion of large Town activities as users are visiting the site looking for this information.

**We are working to improve the current website to make it easier to use. Which areas of enhancement or new features would you find most useful?  
(select no more than 3)**

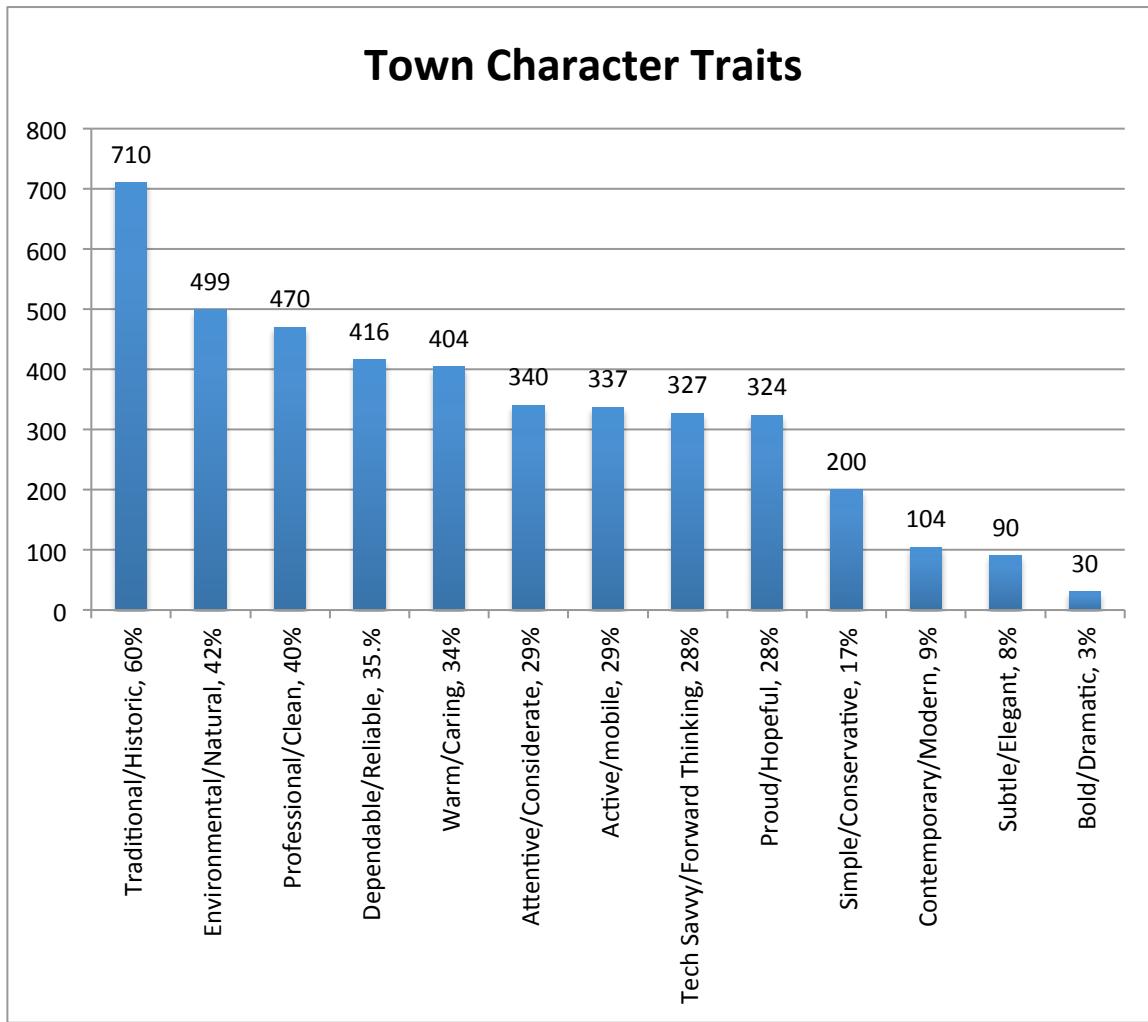
Online transactions, such as payments and permitting, were the top features/enhancements requested (45% or 499), with online service and information requests (41% or 454) the next most popular response. Email, phone, or text messaging was deemed useful by 39% (434) of respondents followed by Maps/GIS information (32% or 351), smart phone/mobile access (30% or 332), and “add to my calendar” feature (19% or 210). Social media (12% or 128), photo galleries (10 or 114), and one-click sharing (4% or 47) were least requested.



**Initial Conclusions/Response:** The Town does provide some online transaction and permit information as well as online service requests, however, there is a desire from respondents to provide enhancements to these offerings. After the launch of the new website the Town will evaluate further and prioritize the next generation of features and enhancements. The current focus of the site update is to migrate existing content to a new Content Management System (CMS) so we might acquire a robust platform in which future additions and enhancements in these, and other areas, can be provided in an efficient manner.

**To help direct the Town in its redesign efforts we would like to establish a tone that best reflects the character of Arlington. To assist us, please pick the character traits you associate with the Town. (select all that apply)**

Traditional/historic led the way with 60% (710) respondents followed by Environmental/Natural (42%), Professional/Clean (40%), Dependable/Reliable (35%), Warm/Caring (34%), Attentive/Considerate (29%), Active/Mobile (29%), Tech Savvy/Forward Thinking (28%), and Proud/Hopeful (28%). These are certainly subjective opinions, but are extremely helpful for the designers as they put a new face on the Town's website that reflects a common view of its residents and how they want the Town to present itself.



**Initial Conclusions/Response:** As previously mentioned the Town is using this feedback to help guide the design of the new site.

## **Top 10 User Comments**

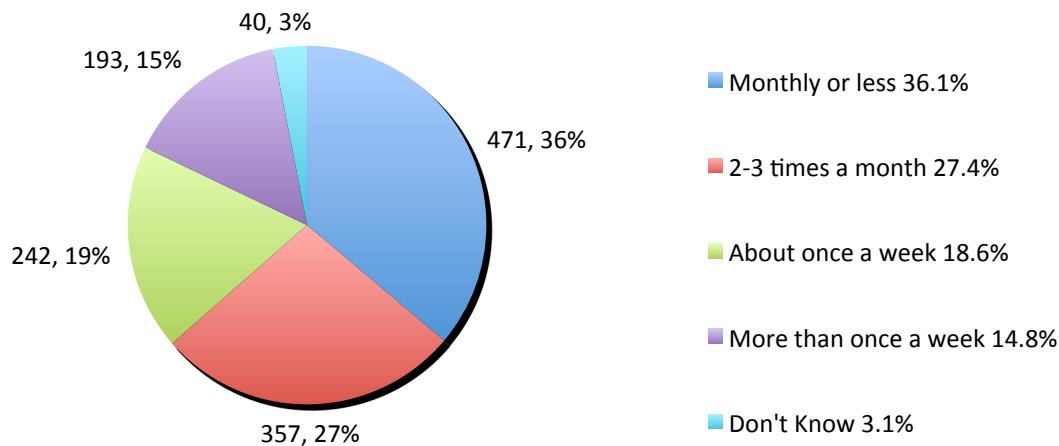


**Initial Conclusions/Responses:** The word cloud above highlights the top 10 user comments provided in the open comments section. Clearly respondents see a need to improve our current navigation and search; basically making it easier to find content. Respondents also desire an updated look with more photos and graphics. There is valuable feedback to boards and committees to maintain and keep their content up-to-date. A primary goal of the new CMS/website is to improve the tools to make this, as well as other tasks, easier for staff. The current website is 508 ADA Compliant and it is a requirement of the project for the new site to be as well. We are pleased so many respondents find value in Town Notices and we will continue with this service and hopefully make enhancements to it in the future. We are also pleased that respondents appreciated the Town's solicitation of feedback and we appreciate respondents' participation. These responses are very helpful in our development of the new site.

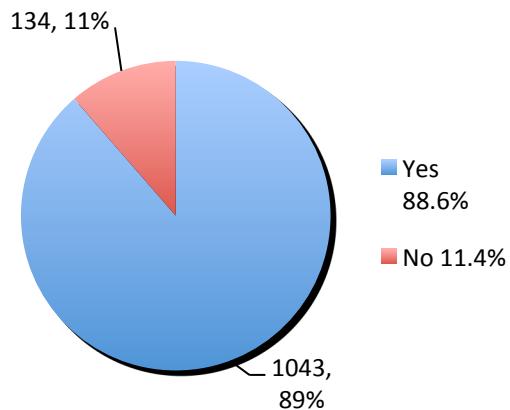
**Next Steps:** The Town is incorporating this feedback as well as feedback gathered from internal stakeholders and website analytics to develop a new arlingtonma.gov. With our new vendor, Vision Internet, we continue to make progress working with over a dozen departments, auditing and evaluating content, as well as refining communication goals. With approximately 10,000 pages to remap and migrate careful planning and preparation will assist in a smooth transition to a new website for both staff and residents, though bumps are expected. We anticipate the new site will launch later in the year.

Vision Internet of Santa Monica, CA is a national leader in government website development and has over 500 clients including San Francisco, Atlanta, and Chapel Hill, NC. Company and client details can be found online at: [visioninternet.com](http://visioninternet.com).

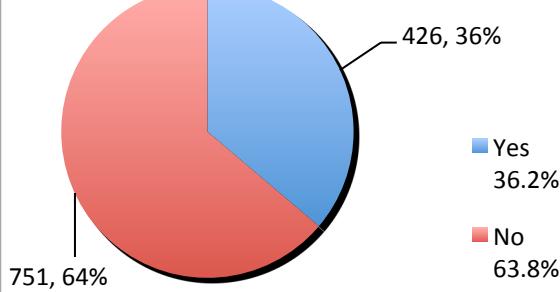
## How often do you visit site?



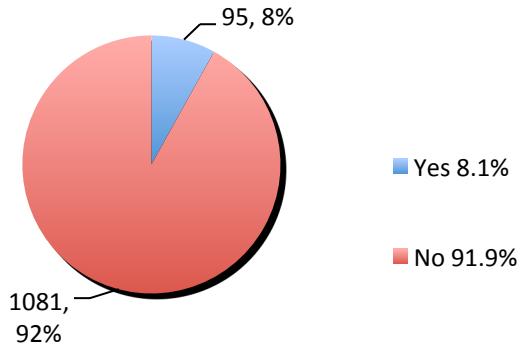
## Arlington Resident?



## Work in Arlington?



## Arlington Business Owner?



## Respondent Age

